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*Eight Hours for Work.* By JOHN RAE. London: Macmillan & Co., 1894. 12mo. pp. 340.

MR. RAE has given us in the present volume a most interesting and valuable addition to the literature of the eight-hours day movement. He has struck out the only really fruitful method of approaching the question as to the probable consequences of a general adoption of the eight-hours working day—the method of experience. Instead of trusting to pre-conceived assumptions about the probable effect of shorter hours, he has taken the pains to verify the assumptions, and ascertain what the actual effects of shorter hours have been in countries which have had experience of them. The available evidence is quite abundant and points to a remarkably uniform conclusion. The question of questions, as Mr. Rae points out, in connection with any proposed reduction of the hours of labor, is the question of the probable effect of the change on the personal efficiency of the work people. If short hours mean short product, then the eight-hours movement is destined to failure; for good wages are at present as essential to the improvement of most of the working class as more leisure. But if it can be shown from recorded experience that a reduction of hours has heretofore been accompanied by an equivalent increase in the laborer's efficiency, then the movement has a real basis. Mr. Rae has gone over the ground carefully and finds that previous reductions in the hours of labor and the eight-hours day itself, so far as it has been tried, have in nearly all cases been followed by the development of unexpected resources in the mind and muscles of the laborers. The sources of this increased efficiency have been found to be the adoption of more perfected methods of production, and the more intelligent organization of industry, by employers; and the general quickening of the intelligence and interest of the laborers, and their greater bodily vigor. In those cases where the diminution of product has been compensated by the greater energy of labor, Mr. Rae thinks that more strain has been taken off by diminishing the duration of labor than was put on by increasing its intensity. But in many cases the improvement in production has been obtained under shorter hours not by working harder so much as by working better and more accurately. "It is a fruit of the mind, of increased intelligence in working, not of increased physical exertion." "The world takes a long time to appreciate adequately the enormous productive power of mere contentment and cheerfulness of mind."

This is the essence of the author's position and he has supported it by abundant citations from recorded experience. He has been careful and discriminating in the use of his evidence, but two doubts suggest themselves in this connection; first, whether he has not overrated the importance of the personal factor in mere machine production and the extent to which its efficiency may be enlarged through the conditions he enumerates; and, secondly, whether many of the cases in which reduction of hours has not been followed by diminished production have not been those where the laborers had been previously suffering from unusual bodily or mental fatigue, and a low standard of living. With this deduction from his conclusion, however, it must yet be conceded that Mr. Rae has fairly neutralized the current presumption against the success of the eight-hours day and made it a fair field for further experiment.

A. C. MILLER.

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*Das Schneidergewerbe in München (Münchener Volkswirtschaftliche Studien. Fünftes Stück).* By DR. GUSTAV HERZBERG. Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1894. 8vo. pp. x + 135.

THIS monograph briefly recounts the struggles of the masters to maintain their monopoly and the means by which their privileges were gradually rendered worthless.

The development of the industry under free competition, the effects of the introduction of machinery, the persistence of the "house industries" (as opposed to the workshop), and the condition of the laborers, are considered more fully. Many valuable tables of statistics are also given which present the effects of certain causes. Its style is such as to commend it to English readers. The sentences are logically developed to a degree quite unlooked for in a German work.

In France the great Revolution brought about the destruction of the trade guilds and assured freedom of production. In Germany the system became yet more firmly established about this time. This method of production stood opposed to the demands of the rapidly rising large industries. As population increased, the guilds, with their numerous restrictions on the freedom of production, were regarded with greater dissatisfaction. The complaints of the journeymen, supported by the agitation of liberal men who were greatly interested in the welfare of the Fatherland and its industries, forced the government to take